

Using Positive Psychology to Get the Most out of Rewiring ***by Candy Widdifield, M.Ed, RCC***

Foundations for Rewiring Your Brain

1. Consistently stop automatic negative thoughts & negative emotions (ANTS)

- Decreases and prunes away negative pathways in the brain
- Our mental and emotional states are not contingent on physical wellbeing or outer circumstances (Deepak Chopra). Think greater than how you feel (Joe Dispenza)

2. Elevate emotional states

- There are many different variations of positive emotions. Pick the ones that work best for you. Some possible elevated states include: love, joy, awe, bliss, wonder, creativity, appreciation, gratitude, humour, contentment, laughter, deep peace & wellbeing, feeling alive, curiosity or intrigue, compassion, kindness.

****To do 1 & 2 effectively we need good self-awareness & a higher level of mindfulness****

3. Repetition

- Reinforces and optimizes positive pathways in the brain
- It takes diligence, persistence, & determination to change (Joe Dispenza)

4. Incremental Training/Shaping/Systematic Desensitization

- Stepping slightly out of the comfort zone and challenging oneself. Combine this with actively directing the brain toward a positive emotional state or deeply engaging focus that brings with it an elevated emotion.

**Keep in mind rewiring is not a linear process. There are ups and downs along the way and the best thing we can do is step back and keep our focus on the bigger picture.*

Creating Resilience

1. Nervous System Regulation / Reset

- Belly breathing, elongating the exhale, being in nature, vagus nerve interventions, Safe & Sound Protocol (SSP), Reiki, connecting with other people/animals that are well regulated

2. Meditation/ Mindfulness

- When you focus on the present moment, you enhance self awareness & increase positive emotional states

3. Spirituality

- Believing in something greater than yourself (and resting into it) or honouring some understanding of the interconnectedness of all beings
- Increases resilience, decreases symptoms of depression, increases life satisfaction & life expectancy

4. **Self-Compassion** (Kristin Neff)

- Many health benefits, interrupts perfectionistic tendencies, helps clear guilt & shame

5. **Earthing** (Ober, Sinatra & Zucker)

- Barefoot ideally, walking or sitting with feet flat on the ground, 30-40 mins, up to 3x/day
- Reconnection with the earth's electrons produces many clinically significant physiological benefits, including: decreased inflammation, increased immunity, decreased pain, better sleep, nervous system regulation, blood thinning, protective effects from electromagnetic pollution.

6. **Heart-Brain Coherence** (Institute of Heart Math)

- Breathing into heart center, begin to imagine breath coming in and out of heart center, (can use a count of 5 in and out initially to get into a rhythm), then once breath is established, focus on a positive/elevated emotion. Feel it in your heart.
 - Research shows the heart sends more signals to the brain than the other way around. Increased heart rhythm coherence through positive emotions affects our entire body, & how we think, perceive, feel & perform.

7. **Optimizing Circadian Rhythms** (The Energy Blueprint)

- Circadian rhythms affect many areas/systems of the body, and greatly affect our vitality & performance.
- Easy steps to reset your circadian rhythm include:
 1. Set sleep time to 10pm. Stick with it every night. Make sure your room is dark.
 2. Use bright light and movement immediately upon waking (20-30mins) either by going out in the sunshine or using a happy light.
 3. Minimize the use of electronic devices and LED lights for two hours before bed

8. **Change Your Perspective About Stress**

- Harvard Research shows that it is not stress itself but our perception of stress that determines whether it is harmful to us
- Activate choice. Connect to the empowerment within yourself. For things you can't change, how can you see it or engage with it differently?
- "See stress as opportunity" - Deepak Chopra

Dealing with Doubt

1. **Suspend judgment.** Set aside a period of time to just do it, then evaluate at the end of the time period
2. **Look and the bigger picture.** Ups and downs along the way are to be expected. Don't get caught up in them
3. Sometimes big events or things that happen periodically or once a year show us how far we've come. **We don't always realize the amount we've changed in the day to day.**
4. Remember that **practices take time to build and create resonance**
5. "Come, come again"...(Rumi). **Every day is a fresh start**

6. **Ask for support** from a higher power if you believe in one (angel, divine being, planet, life force, source energy, universe, mother nature, night sky, etc.) & breathe it in. Open yourself to receive that love & support as deeply as you can. Practice taking it in.
7. **Change your perception:** You “get to”, not “have to”. Remember your “why”.
8. **Celebrate small victories.** Every step in the right direction, no matter how tiny, is a success!
9. **Find beauty.** Beauty helps you access love or higher emotional states
10. **Remember that it is darkest right before dawn.** When it gets really hard and we want to give up is usually right before a breakthrough if we stay the course.

Other Positive Psychology Tools

1. Connect with your motivation

- Become really clear on why you are doing this retraining, who you are doing it for, and why it is important to you. Remind yourself of this regularly.

2. Set your Intention

- Where your attention goes your energy flows. What is your intention and why is it important to you? What qualities do you need to embrace to achieve this intention and how can you invite more of those qualities into your daily life?
- What will it look like and feel like when you achieve your intention? How would you know you achieved it?

3. Connect with your Strengths

- VIA character strengths survey (www.viacharacter.org). Character strengths are the positive parts of your personality that impact how you think, feel & behave. Knowing and applying your highest character strengths is key to becoming your best self.
- What strength do you need most right now? How can you draw on your strengths to support you today? At the end of the day, reflect on how you used your strengths today.

4. Make Gratitude a daily Practice

- Gratitude improves mood, decreases stress & depression, and makes people happier overall. In order to get to benefit, it needs to be practiced regularly. Connecting to the feeling makes it more powerful.
- Journaling as little as two minutes each night before bed can improve wellbeing.

Dear Candy Blog on rewiringyourwellness.com - email rewiring questions to dearcandyquestions@gmail.com

For more information on Candy, visit her website at www.candywiddifield.com

To book coaching, email candy.thriving@email.com